

# **IOWA BIRD LIFE**

**IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**



Summer 2010 . Volume 80 . Number 3



## IOWA BIRD LIFE

*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.*

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# Meet an Iowa Birder: Keith Dyche

*Ross Silcock*

Keith Dyche is one of the up-and-coming new young (-ish) birders in Iowa. He and his “very supportive birder-chick” wife Julia (who approved this title with some concern about political correctness) live in Shenandoah, in the center of the birdiest part of Iowa, the extreme southwest.

Keith was born in Mount Pleasant, Utah in 1958, the third of six children. His father was a teacher, which resulted in the family moving from Utah to Kansas and, when Keith was six, to Maryville, Missouri, where Keith grew up (so he says). Keith was in the Army out of high school for three years and since then has worked in the plumbing business, which allows him to look for birds as he travels. He is often seen “plumbing” in the River-ton and Forney Lake vicinities. Wife Julia holds an MFA degree, is an accomplished artist, participates in TICA (Teachers in Contemporary Art) at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and teaches at Shenandoah High School. Keith has three children and two step-children. All of the children have birded with Keith; son Riley (eighteen) has helped on the Shenandoah CBC for a few years and even went with Keith to Duluth to see owls, a trip that separates the men from the boys in the birding world!

Like many of us, Keith was interested in nature as a child, and was afflicted with that common birder malady: keeping copious notebooks about the wildlife he saw and wanted to see, as well as bringing home the usual eclectic bunch of skulls, bugs, etc. Keith’s father had some Peterson Field Guides, but Keith lacked binoculars in the early years. His birding interest was piqued by his sighting of an American Redstart while hunting for mushrooms as a boy, and later various quail and pheasant hunting trips involved bird sightings like the flushing of seven Short-eared Owls. Keith’s interest in birds continued through his Boy Scout years, culminating when he reached the Eagle Scout level. Then in 2001, Keith met Marie Tiemann, long-time Shenandoah birder and IOU member, who invited Keith to the Shenandoah CBC, and suggested he join the Iowa Ornithologists’ Union. Keith has attended most of the IOU meetings since his first in Keosauqua in spring 2006. At that meeting he met Bob and John Cecil and was amazed at their birding knowledge; John encouraged Keith to spend as much time in the field as possible, the best way to enhance birding skills and knowledge.

Keith has followed John Cecil’s advice with significant results. He found his first accidental species 2 August 2007 at Rapp Park near Shenandoah, a Tricolored Heron that was seen subsequently by many people. Keith made a major contribution to Iowa Ornithology during the summer of 2008 when he discovered a large mixed heronry in the dense cat-tails at Forney Lake in Fremont County. The heronry contained a large number of Cattle Egrets, as well as Great and Snowy Egrets, Black-crowned Night-Herons, and rarer species like Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White-faced Ibis, Least and American Bitterns, and even a few Green Herons flying around. On 11 July, Keith found a Tricolored Heron and a few Glossy Ibis, and confirmed breeding for Black-crowned Night-Heron and White-faced Ibis. In an attempt to confirm nesting by Glossy Ibis, Keith spent an exciting

night among the persistent mosquitoes, camouflaging his canoe with cattails, and finding that in the deep water the canoe was so top-heavy that he could barely climb into it. Although he was unable to confirm nesting glossies, the night sounds, notably the squeals and clucks of the ubiquitous coots and grebes, made the trip interesting.

Other significant finds Keith has made in southwest Iowa include (but will no doubt not be limited to) Whimbrel at Forney Lake and Riverton, Glossy Ibis at Riverton and Forney Lake, a California Gull, nesting White-winged Doves, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and a Snowy Owl (daughter Breanna was along for this one). As a true birder, Keith would like to attempt a 300-species year in Iowa “if the cards fall into place”, which I suspect is birder-speak implying the requisite support of the “birder-chick”!

Keith has made birding trips to Texas, Louisiana, and Colorado, and would love to visit Central America, Alaska, and New Zealand in the future. As a Kiwi myself, I’m not sure they’d let him into that last country, though!

An active member of Iowa Ornithologists’ Union, Keith serves on the Projects Committee, and has written articles for *Iowa Bird Life* on his sightings of Tricolored Herons and Glossy Ibis. He also is a member of the Nebraska Ornithologists’ Union and is showing unmistakable signs of following the irresistible lure of Nebraska’s birds, as have other Iowans before him, notably Steve Dinsmore and yours truly. Keith currently compiles the Shenandoah CBC and tries to cover the CBCs each year in Taylor County and at Squaw Creek NWR in northwest Missouri.

Keith is great company and an excellent birder; he and I had a fun day tracking down Nebraska’s first Fish Crow near Plattsmouth, only a stone’s throw from the west coast of Iowa! I wish Keith and Julia and family all the best and anticipate many more contributions from Keith to Iowa’s ornithology.

P.O. Box 57, Tabor, IA 51653

## Field Reports—Spring 2010

*Matthew C. Kenne*

### WEATHER

The long, hard winter of 2009–2010 continued only into the first week of March, and then a welcome non-stop spring thaw began. In northwest Iowa, where two to three feet of snow covered the ground at the beginning of the March, lingering fog cleared on the 17th to reveal a snow-free countryside. Unfortunately, snow melt and rainfall overflowed



*Matthew C. Kenne*

rivers and streams, causing flooding in many areas. A late March snowstorm in south-central Iowa pushed the snow season total to almost 48 inches, the 7th greatest snow season total on record, but still the first 80 degree temps arrived by the 30th. The entire state reached the 80s on April 1st, and the rest of the month was just plain nice, equaling the 5th warmest April ever. May put the brakes on the heat wave, however, with two weeks of cool temperatures from the 6th through the 21st, punctuated by an almost statewide freeze on the 9th. Rainfall was lightest in the northwest, but continued heavy to the southeast, aggravating flooding conditions. Summer-like heat closed out the month, peaking at 96 degrees in Algona on the 24th and bringing the spring season to a close as the 8th warmest on record. The heat didn't generate much bang

however, as the spring of 2010 produced few severe thunderstorms, and a spring such as this one without a tornado hasn't occurred since 1978.

#### GENERAL TRENDS

Last year, I characterized the spring passerine migration as described by Iowa birders' comments as "lackluster". This year, some comments were more critical:

"In central Iowa, this was the worst season I can recall for both warblers and shore-birds." Bery Engebretsen

"This will be a short report, as the spring migration was by far the lightest of the 21 springs that I've spent in Decorah." Dennis Carter

In concrete terms, the number of bird sightings submitted by almost the same suite of contributors as 2009 was down by about 25%, and high counts of many regular migrant species were down. I noted a lack of April woodland migrants in my neighborhood, and there was a corresponding lack of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Brown Creepers, Winter Wrens, kinglets, Hermit Thrushes, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Fox Sparrows entered into the database from other areas. This suggests that pleasant April weather rarely caused notable migrant fallout, and if there were new arrivals overnight, the birds weren't grounded long by inclement conditions. Another effect of April warmth was that deciduous leaf-out and flowering was ahead of schedule, making visual observation of May birds more difficult.

If migrants weren't brought down in droves by the weather, they were brought in early: fine April flying weather likely contributed to the early arrival of individuals of a number of species, including Broad-winged Hawk, Black-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Northern Rough-winged and Cliff Swallows, several warblers, Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows, and Bobolink.

Widespread passerine fallout was reported the morning of 7 May, one of few notable

dates mentioned, at the start of the wettest week in two years. Then came cold and the biggest May freeze in 13 years on the 9th. When it finally warmed again after the 21st, birds rushed out of the state, with few reports of lingering thrushes, flycatchers, and warblers after that date. Birders seldom search for the last individuals of the spring migration with the same intensity that they do their FOYs, but only Black-throated Blue Warblers and a Purple Finch were found notably late this year. Did the hard freeze of 9 May negatively impact the availability of food to the point where migrants sought better foraging conditions elsewhere?

Widespread flooding was a major concern in the state this spring, especially in the Des Moines R watershed. Starting with heavy snowmelt early on, flooding continued throughout the season in many areas, making access to favorite riparian birding areas complicated or impossible. Flooding likewise affected shorebirding: with many regular areas too full of water to attract migrants, Dunbar Slough in Greene County and Hawkeye Wildlife Area in Johnson County stood out as the most reliable locations. Like many passerines, migrant shorebirds were effectively gone after 21 May as well, although their disappearance was likely caused by high water levels. You might think wet conditions would attract more water birds, but surprisingly low numbers were reported for several species, including Cackling Goose, American Wigeon, Redhead, and Common Goldeneye. The arrival of ducks and geese was initially delayed by frozen conditions, but once under way, the bulk of passage appears have been completed by mid-April. Herons as a group were widespread, although few Great Egrets were noted away from the Mississippi River and only one Black-crowned Night-Heron was found in north-central marshes. Grebes were seen in normal numbers, while Common Loons were scarce, and the rarer loons weren't found at all. White-faced Ibis roamed the state again this spring, but again no nesting was reported.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

Accidental or Casual species reported were Neotropic Cormorant, Black Rail, King Rail, Whimbrel, Laughing Gull, Burrowing Owl, a raven, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren, and Western Tanager. Other notable finds this spring included an early Black Scoter, Black-necked Stilts, an early Red-necked Phalarope, plentiful Swainson's Hawks, large white-headed gulls on the Mississippi River, multiple White-winged Doves, a lone Barn Owl, eastern Western Kingbirds, nesting Red-breasted Nuthatches, a brief Varied Thrush, late Black-throated Blue Warblers, possibly nesting Pine Warbler, a wandering Prairie Warbler, and a single Nelson's Sparrow.

## SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental. \*  
= documented, ph = photo. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **ad** = adult, **imm** = immature, **juv** = juvenile, **L** = lake, **L&D** = lock and dam, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **RA** = recreation area, **Res**

= reservoir, **R** = river, **SP** = state park, **WA** = wildlife area.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** The migratory wave reached mid-Iowa latitudes mid-March: 600 on 14 Mar *Jackson* (CRE), 900 on 14 Mar *Polk* (BE), and 500 on 15 Mar *Woodbury* (GLV). 190 on 18 Mar at Dan Green Sl *Clay* (LAS) was the only

large group reported from the north. One or two stragglers remained mid-May *Hamilton* and *Greene* (SJD), and 25 May at Hubbard sewage lagoon *Hardin* (MPr).

**Snow Goose:** A dozen appeared 1 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH), well before other signs of spring in the north. 4000 on 9 Mar at Green Bay Bottoms *Lee* (JWR), 30,000 on 11 Mar at Rapp P *Page* (KDy), and 7750 on 11 Mar flying north over Gray's L *Polk* (JB) marked the shift to warmer spring weather. 100,000 were noted moving through *Woodbury* 15–17 Mar (GLV). The last 4 were at the Alden sewage lagoon *Hardin* 21 May (MPr).

**Ross's Goose:** Small flocks passed through east and central Iowa with the Snow Geese, the largest group of 22 on 12 Mar at Waterloo *Black Hawk* (DE). An estimated 6000 with a like number of Snow Geese 21 Mar *Fremont* (KDy) was the only large gathering noted. Late singles were found 10–17 May *Poweshiek*, *Carroll*, *Hamilton*, and *O'Brien* (MPr, SJD).

**Cackling Goose:** Very few were reported. The high count was 10 at Ada Hayden P *Story* 18 Mar (WO). The last singles were 11 Apr *Union* (TMH) and 12 Apr at Diamond L *Poweshiek* (MPr). It's unclear whether there were actually fewer Cackling Geese in Iowa this spring, fewer seen by birders, or whether there were just fewer reported by birders.

**Canada Goose:** 3000 on 10 Mar at Grand Ave Sod Farm *Dallas* were part of the first big waterfowl push into central Iowa (JG). Flocks of 41, 57, and 65 non-breeders were still found 23 and 26 May lounging in fields around USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).



*Trumpeter Swan brood, Hamilton, 31 May 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA*

**Mute Swan:** A free-flying ad was noted 26 Apr at Rock Creek SP *Jasper* (MPr), provenance, as always, debatable.

**Trumpeter Swan:** The largest migrant flock was 23 on 18 Mar in flooded fields near Grimes *Polk* (JG). Trumpeters were widely reported from 20 counties in the east, west, and south, but largely unreported from their north Iowa nesting range.

**Tundra Swan:** Two were identifiable 4 Mar among 12 swans at L&D 14 *Scott* (JF), but they were found elsewhere only in the northeast: 110 on 21 Mar at a farm pond *Winnesheik*, and 60 on 22 Mar and 36 on 28 Mar at Cardinal M *Winnesheik* (all DC).

**Wood Duck:** First: 4 on 11 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 4 on 21 Mar *Marshall* (MPr).

**Gadwall:** First: 2 on 10 Mar *Dallas* (JG) and 2 on 11 Mar *Story* (WO). Most: 175 were counted 20 Mar at West L *Clarke* (JG), while an estimated 1000 were with thousands of Mallards and Northern Pintails 22 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). 30 were getting late on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), and the last were pairs 26 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) and 30 May at Errington M *Polk* (BE).



*Blue-winged Teal, Harrier M., Boone, 29 April 2010.  
Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA*

**American Wigeon:** First: 9 Mar at Green Bay Bottoms *Lee* (JWR) and 10 Mar at Grand Ave Sod Farm *Dallas* (JG). The peak of 8 on 2 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) was a third of all individuals reported for the season. Last were 2 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD).

**American Black Duck:** From 1 to 4 were reported until 27 Mar *Page, Jackson, Marshall, Story, and Louisa* (KDY, BSc, CRE, MPr, SJD). A late single was noted 9 May near *Exira Audubon* (SJD).

**Blue-winged Teal:** First: 3 on 19 Mar in flooded fields near *Grimes Polk* (JB). The usual reports of teal abundance were received: 289 on 3 Apr and 231 on 9 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (both SJD), and "1000's during migration at various *Woodbury wetlands*" (GLV).

**Cinnamon Teal:** All: drakes 9 and 10 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY, JG), 21–27 Apr at Luton WMA *Woodbury* (GLV, TLu), and 2 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Northern Shoveler:** First: 10 Mar in both *Dallas* and *Polk* (JG, JB). Most: 340

on 3 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD) and 400 on 20 Apr at Diehl Wetlands *Warren* (JS). Last: 4 drakes both 26 and 31 May at two locations *Kossuth* (MCK) and a pair on 30 May at *Chichaqua WA Polk* (BE).

**Northern Pintail:** First: 10 Mar in both *Dallas* and *Polk* (JG, JB). Most: 200 on 13 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC). Last: 11 May at *Goose L Greene* (SJD) and 2 on 14 May in *Polk* (JB).

**Green-winged Teal:** First: 4 on 10 Mar at Grand Ave Sod Farm *Dallas* (JG) and 2 on 14 Mar at Green Island WA *Jackson* (CRE). Most: 214 on 3 Apr

at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD). Last: 21 May at Buffalo Basins WMA *Franklin* (DP) and 26 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Canvasback:** First, both 6 Mar: 3 at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH) and 2 at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc). The flooded Des Moines R in Boone held 1000 Canvasbacks 23–28 Mar (DCH), and then they were gone. Only one was reported subsequently: 10 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP).

**Redhead:** Three on 6 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* were early birds (PH). The peak was only 42 on 13 Mar at Runnells Overlook *Warren* (JG). One 11 May at Harrier M *Boone* (SJD) was late in central Iowa, while 2 on 18 May at McBreen M *Dickinson* (MHB) and 4 on 26 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) were the last.

**Ring-necked Duck:** The first away from the Mississippi R were 14 on 11 Mar in flooded fields near *Grimes Polk* (JB). Numbers peaked the end of Mar: 157 on 28 Mar at Dan Green Sl *Clay* (LAS), 500 on 29 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), and 1952 on 3 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont*

(SJD). The last was a single 15 May at Snake Creek M *Greene* (SJD).

**Greater Scaup:** From 1 to 5 were spotted in eight counties until early Apr. The final three reports came from three additional counties: 2 at Volga River RA *Fayette* and 4 at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (both 11 Apr JJD, SJD), and 2 on 14 Apr at Cedar L *Chickasaw* (PH).

**Lesser Scaup:** The first inland migrants appeared 6 Mar in *Cerro Gordo*, *Linn*, and *Polk* (PH, BSc, JB). Peak reports came from 3 Apr: 400 at Crystal L *Hancock* (JB), 400 at Storm L *Buena Vista* (JG), and 500 in flooded fields *Osceola* (JG). Last: 2 on 18 May at Eagle L *Hancock* (CJF).

**Surf Scoter:** All: an imm with Canvasbacks 22 Mar *Tama* (MPr) [second earliest], a fem/imm 4 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (BE), and a fem 11 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD).

**White-winged Scoter:** An ad male was at Ada Hayden P *Story* 5 May (SJD).

**Black Scoter:** Dale Fye found an imm male at Pleasant Creek SRA *Linn* 30 Mar [ties record early]. The bird lingered and was seen until 17 Apr (DP, BSc, JLF).

**Bufflehead:** Began migrating inland with 3 on 10 Mar *Linn* (BSc) and 4 on 11 Mar *Polk* (JB). Most: 60 on 3 Apr at Crystal L *Hancock* (JB). Last: 2 females 9 May at Lewis Bottoms Rd *Linn* (BSc) and a female 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD).

**Common Goldeneye:** Last: a female 12 Apr at Table Marsh WMA *Woodbury* (POR). Only 49 were reported total.

**Hooded Merganser:** Two pioneering migrants found open water 6 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH). Broods were found at the end of May to the south in *Polk* and *Linn* (BE, BSc, DTh).

**Common Merganser:** Most: 253 on 27 Mar at Hallett's Quarry *Polk* (JG) was the only large group reported. Last: 11 Apr at

Green Valley L *Union* (TMH) and 2 on 19 Apr at Mud L *Dubuque* (CRE).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** First: 3 on 7 Mar below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (BE). The peak was easily 409 on 27 Mar at Hallett's Quarry and nearby Raccoon River P *Polk* (JG), while the largest groups in the north were 71 on 28 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH) and 68 on 3 Apr at Crystal L *Hancock* (JB). Last: 8 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 2 on 10 May at Sand Lake WA *Marshall* (MPr).

**Ruddy Duck:** The first was a lone hen with Common Mergansers 8 Mar at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc). Ray Cummins reported the largest gathering of 240 on 10 Apr at L Rathbun *Appanoose*. Four drakes were still hanging out at USNWR *Kossuth* 26 May (MCK).

**Gray Partridge:** Partridge melted away with the snow cover, as only one or two were noted in six counties.

**Ruffed Grouse:** Three singles in *Winnebago* 21–29 May (DK, JG) were the only ones reported.

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Gatherings of less than ten were encountered at the Kellerton lek *Ringgold* in Mar and Apr (m.ob).

**Northern Bobwhite:** From 1–4 were noted *Decatur*, *Ringgold*, *Adair*, *Polk*, and *Linn* (NJM, DTh, SJD, AB, BSc).

**Common Loon:** First: 26 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (Deb Tesar fide PH), and then 27 Mar at 3 locations *Polk* and *Story* (JG, JB, WO). Loons were only noted at 13 locations this spring, and the high counts were only 4 birds: 31 Mar at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (MPr) and 24 Apr at Pleasant Creek SRA *Linn* (DP). They didn't linger either: the last were singles 14 May at Brushy Creek RA *Webster* (SJD) and 18 May at Clear L (CJF).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** First: 18 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (K Dy) and 2 on 19 Mar at *Polk City* WA *Polk* (DTh). The largest

groups were 35 on 9 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (BT) and 27 on 11 Apr at Raccoon River P *Polk* (JG).

**Horned Grebe:** First: 20 Mar at West L *Clarke* (JG). Other than the 13 on 11 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE), from 1–6 were reported from a dozen counties in the southern two thirds of the state until 18 Apr. A late straggler was at Harrier M *Boone* 15–17 May (LGD).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Possible nesting birds were seen in the north: 5 on 15 May and 1 on 17 May at Grover's L *Dickinson* (LAS, MHB), 18 May at Harmon L WMA *Winnebago* (CJF), and 2 on 18 May at Eagle L *Hancock* (CJF).

**Eared Grebe:** First: singles 27 Mar at L *Manawa Pottawattamie* (KDy) and 29 Mar at L *Rathbun Appanoose* (CRE). Most: 6 on 10 Apr at Raccoon River P *Polk* (John Cecil). One or two were found at ten additional locations until 20 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Western Grebe:** All: 8 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV), 15 May at Silver L *Dickinson* (LAS), and 23 May at Sand Lake WA *Marshall* (MPr).

**American White Pelican:** Fifteen at Red Rock Res *Marion* 6 Mar survived the winter below the dam, while 25 at Ft Madison *Des Moines* were the first new migrants (BT). Peak numbers were reported from early Apr: 320 on 4 Apr at L *Colchester Warren* (JG), and 200 at both Mt *Sterling M Van Buren* and Sandhill L *Woodbury* 10 Apr (CRE, GLV).

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT:** Steve Dinsmore discovered a subadult at Pierce Creek RA *Page* 3 Apr (\*SJD), where it was seen and photographed until at least 4 May (DCD). What was presumably the same bird moved to Rapp P *Page* by 16 May, where it remained through the end of the period (KDy-photo).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** First: 8

on 14 Mar at L&D 13 *Clinton* (CRE). Most: 670 on 11 Apr at Hallett's Quarry *Polk* (JG). A rookery with 9 nests was found near Crystal L *Hancock* (CJF), a rare find away from the Mississippi R. Four still lingered at Cedar L *Linn* 31 May (BT).

**American Bittern:** First: 2 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy) and 8 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO). They were reported from 16 additional widespread counties, with peak counts of 5–7 birds from *Clinton*, *Dickinson*, and *Fremont* (TMH, LAS, KDy).

**Least Bittern:** First: 13 May *Polk* (DK) and 14 May at Goose L *Greene* (TMH). Also found *Story*, *Dickinson*, *Fremont*, *Linn*, and *Humboldt* (WO, MHB, KDy, BSc, JN).

**Great Egret:** First: 3 on 3 Apr *Linn* (DP), followed by 6 Apr in both *Marshall* and *Decatur* (MPr, NJM). Only single digit counts were reported, except for 110 on a nesting island 2 May at Pool 13 *Clinton* (SJD). Late non-breeding birds included 2 on 26 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) and 2 on 29 May at Cardinal M *Winneschiek* (JG).

**Snowy Egret:** Three singles were noted: 1 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (James Huntington fide JF), 15 May in a flooded field south of Norwalk *Warren* (BE), and 24 May at Springbrook SP *Guthrie* (MSIM/Nick R. Smith-photo).

**Little Blue Heron:** The first were 14 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 21 Apr *Dallas* (TL), and the last was also in *Fremont* on 23 May (KDy). In between, singles were noted *Mills*, *Woodbury*, and *Boone* (LGD, SJD, GLV, JG, TLu, HZ, JB).

**Cattle Egret:** The first of many was in the L *Rathbun* area *Appanoose* 3 Apr (DT). Larger groups of 10–22 were found in Apr in *Union* and *Boone* (TMH, SJD), and in May in *Pottawattamie* and *Fremont* (POR, KDy). Smaller groups were noted east to *Johnson* and north to *Dickinson* and *Kossuth* (JF, MHB, MCK).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** First: a single at Otter Creek M *Tama* (JG, JB) and 4 at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), both 30 Apr. Up to 7 were noted later in only *Greene*, *Woodbury*, and *Dickinson* (m.ob.).

**White-faced Ibis:** First: 22 Apr *Fremont* (TMH). Sizeable flocks roamed the southwestern quarter of the state late Apr/early May: 17 in *Lucas* (Dale Garner fide AB), 19 in *Woodbury* (GLV), 18 in *Greene* (RIA, PHA), and 28 in *Fremont* (KDy). From 1–5 were noted in eleven other counties east to *Johnson* 24–28 Apr (JLF, DP, CRE) and north to *Winnebago* 24 May and *Kossuth* 28 May (both TMH).

**Plegadis species:** Three flying away from the observer 30 Mar *Plymouth* (POR) were unidentifiable to species, but record early for the genus.

**Turkey Vulture:** Active nests were found 24 Apr *Montgomery* (DCD) and 30 May *Warren* (JS).

**Osprey:** First: 27 Mar at Cone M *Louisa* (SJD-photo), and returning nesters 31 Mar at both L Macbride *Johnson* (BSc) and Hallett's Quarry *Polk* (JG). Fewer migrants have been reported in recent years now that a nesting population has been reestablished around the state.

**Mississippi Kite:** The first were an ad migrant 7 May *Warren* (JG) [ties third earliest] and a subadult 23 May *Kossuth* (MCK). Up to 3 were seen over possible nesting areas at Des Moines *Polk* in late May (AMJ, JB, PJW).

**Bald Eagle:** Away from the Mississippi R or major reservoirs, migration was noted by 50 on 11 Mar at Decorah *Winneshiek* (DC) and 86 on 17 Mar at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Northern Harrier:** Like the winter season, a few singles were reported in Mar in the southern half of the state. They were noted on the move in north Iowa by 2 on

3 Apr at Crystal L *Hancock* (JB) and 3 on 7 Apr at Hanlontown M *Worth* (RGo). Surprisingly, none were reported after 1 May.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Migration was first noted by 3 on 26 Mar at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (JT) and 3 on 28 Mar at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), but only 7 additional singles were reported from four counties. The last was the only May bird: 15 May at Beam Woods *Jones* (CRE).

**Cooper's Hawk:** The only observation of multiple birds was 5 on 26 Mar at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (JT). Jim Sinclair watched one feeding on a freshly killed male Wood Duck 28 Mar at Woodland Mounds *Warren*—prey that is 20% larger in mass than the predator. Possible or confirmed nesting was noted *Winneshiek*, *Kossuth* (3), *Polk*, *Woodbury*, and *Decatur* (Lee Zieke, MCK, RIC, GLV, NJM).

**Northern Goshawk:** A juv 13–16 Mar at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) was likely the same bird observed during the winter season.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Except for 3 Apr at Waubonsie SP *Fremont* (KDy), scattered birds were reported southeast of a *Decatur*, *Polk*, *Black Hawk*, *Fayette* line.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** First: 3 Apr at Twin Ponds *Chickasaw* (\*PH) [record early]. Most: 8 on 18 Apr and 31 on 24 Apr, both at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK). Away from *Kossuth*, 9 single birds were noted from eight counties. Late May individuals at Waubonsie SP *Pottawattamie* (AB) and Des Moines *Polk* (PJW) were from possible nesting areas.

**Swainson's Hawk:** One on 31 Mar *Hamilton* (MPr) was the first of 87 individuals reported from 17 counties in the western half of the state (with the exception of 10 Apr *Van Buren* CRE). Most: 15 on 7 Apr at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (JT), and 6–10 attracted to grassland burns 8 and 10 Apr

*Pottawattamie*, *Ringgold*, and *Jasper* (Chad Graeve fide JT, Torre Hovick, BSc). The last was a late migrant heading north over USNWR *Kossuth* 23 May (MCK).

**Red-tailed Hawk:**

The only large scale movement noted was 117 on 26 Mar at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (JT). A total of 5 Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks were spotted in *Pottawattamie*, *Kossuth*, *Cass*, and *Appanoose* 26 Mar–10 Apr (JT, MCK, JG, RLC).

**Rough-legged Hawk:**

Few were noted on their way out of the state: 5 on 17 Mar at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV) and 6 singles, the final on 14 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Golden Eagle:** An imm was seen near Larry Stone's home near Elkader *Clayton* 7 and 8 Apr.

**Merlin:** Ten singles were seen in Mar and Apr, with *richardsoni* outscoring *columbarius* 4:2 among those where a subspecies determination was made.

**Peregrine Falcon:** The first outside a regular nesting area was 8 Apr at Snake Creek M *Greene* (TMH). Only 10 migrants were reported until 13 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Prairie Falcon:** One of the winter season's falcons at the Sioux Jersey Cattle Farm *Woodbury* remained until 3 Mar (TLu).

**BLACK RAIL:** One was detected by call during a marshbird survey at USNWR *Kossuth* 28 May (\*JDL).

**KING RAIL:** During intensive marshbird surveys this spring by Iowa State researcher Tyler Harms, responses to King Rail recordings included: 2 on 27 Apr at



*Virginia Rail*, Harrier M., Boone, 8 May 2010. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA

Goose L *Clinton*, 15 May at Snake Creek M *Greene*, 2 on 16 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene*, 19 May at Big Wall L *Wright*, and 25 May at Hogsback WMA *Winnebago*. These results suggest that King Rail is more common in the state than recent reports indicate.

**Virginia Rail:** The first were 12 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 2 on 18 Apr at Bjorkboda M *Hamilton* (JN).

**Sora:** First: 9 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (BT) and 2 on 11 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). The highest counts were 23 on 27 Apr at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (TMH) and 19 on 15 May at Snake Creek M *Greene* (SJD). Also on 15 May, Tom Lawson found 2 adults with 3 early juveniles at Voas Nature Center *Dallas*.

**Common Moorhen:** All: 2 on 14 May at John Deere Dike *Dubuque* (CRE), and 2 on 14 May at Goose L *Greene*, 2 on 18 May at Big Wall L *Wright*, and 20 May at Bluewing M *Cerro Gordo* (all TMH).

**American Coot:** The first were 3 on 21 Mar at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPR). Peaks of 2000 were counted 27 Mar at Mt

Sterling M *Van Buren* (RLC) and 9 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (BT).

**Sandhill Crane:** Breeding pairs had returned 11 Mar *Winneshiek* (Lee Zieke) and 13 Mar *Louisa* (DP). The largest groups found were 30 on 1 Apr at Otter Creek M *Tama* (MPR) and 23 on 17 Apr at Pool Sl *Allamakee* (FL). Cranes scattered over the eastern half of the state, except for nesting again at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). Nesting was also confirmed at Ventura M *Cerro Gordo*, the first modern record (CJF).

**Black-bellied Plover:** First: 4 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP), and 11 were at this location by 11 May (JF). Sixteen found 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) was the highest count. The final birds were 2 on 14 May at Errington M *Polk* (TMH) and 3

on 16 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD). Only 5 others were reported.

**American Golden-Plover:** First: 28 Mar *Muscatine* and 29 Mar *Appanoose* (both CRE). Peak counts across the state were: 83 on 16 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV), more than 100 flying over *Kossuth* 2 May (MCK), and 6 on 4 May *Johnson* (JLF). The final birds were 6 in *Hardin* 17 May (MPR).

**Semipalmated Plover:** First: 5 on 18 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 21 Apr at Lewis Bottoms Rd *Linn* (DP). Most: 18 on 8 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF) and 28 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD). The last were 2 on 21 May *Story* (MPR). They were only reported from three additional counties.

**Piping Plover:** All: 3 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (James Huntington fide DP), 8 May at Hawkeye WA (James Huntington fide JF), 5 on 9 May at MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* (JG), and 14 May in a flooded field *Greene* (JDL).

**Killdeer:** First: 2 on 4 Mar *Jefferson* (Tim Franklin) and 12 on 5 Mar *Decatur* (NJM).

**Black-necked Stilt:** All: 5 on 28 Apr at Otter Creek M *Tama* (JF), and a single 8 May at Luton WMA *Woodbury* (GLV, TLu).

**American Avocet:** A group of 5 near Table Marsh WMA *Woodbury* 3 Apr were record early (GLV, POR). An impressive movement occurred across the state's midsection: 17 on 28 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (JOb, WO), 73 on 29 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (DTh), and 26 at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV), 60 at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW), and 12 at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JB, RGo), all 30 Apr. The only subsequent sightings were 5 remaining at Table Marsh WMA and one at Hawkeye WA, both 9 May (POR, DP).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** First: 18 Apr in *Louisa*, *Polk*, and *Decatur* (DP, JG, DAK).



*Sandhill Crane*, Boone, 3 April 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA

**Solitary Sandpiper:** The first, 12 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), was earlier than usual, and the next were 18 Apr at both Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and Grimes Polk (JB). Most: 13 on 26 Apr *Wapello* (CRE). Last: 9 May *Cass* (JG) and 15 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** One 7 Mar at Diehl Wetlands Warren (JS) was almost a month ahead of the next on 2 Apr in Linn and Appanoose (BT, JWR). Peak numbers were found in the south, with 15 found in *Decatur* and Van Buren (JRL, CRE) and 50 on 11 Apr at Sedan Bottoms Appanoose (RLC). The last on 28 May at Cardinal M Winneshiek (DC) was two weeks later than all others.

**Willet:** An early individual was in *Decatur* 12 Apr (NJM). Two thirds of the birds reported were found 27 Apr–2 May, with large flocks found across the state: 33 in *Guthrie* (DTh), 40 in *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP), and 27 in *Scott* (BT). The last were 2 on 13 May *Sac* (PE).

**Lesser Yellowlegs.** The first were later than normal: 2 Apr at Mt Sterling M Van Buren (JJD) and 2 on 2 Apr at Dean Appanoose (JWR). The most reported were 800 on 13 May at Riverton *Fremont* (KDy), with notable gatherings of 200 on 29 Apr at Mallard Flats *Madison* (DTh) and 195 on 6 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (SJD). The last was a single 21 May along Lewis Bottoms Rd Linn (DP).

**Upland Sandpiper:** Early, and by far the largest concentration reported, were 18 on 9 Apr around the Kellerton Prairie Chicken lek *Ringgold* (BSc). One or two were noted in eleven other counties.

**WHIMBREL:** A single Whimbrel was spotted flocking with other shorebirds on 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (\*KDy).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** The first was a single godwit 21 Apr at Lamoni *Decatur*

(Matt Torres), followed by 5 on 29 Apr at Mallard Flats *Madison* (DTh), and then the peak of 16 on 30 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV). From 1–9 were found in nine additional counties, with the last 4 on 30 May at Barringer Sl *Clay* (MCK).

**Marbled Godwit:** Only 3 singles were found this spring, a far cry from this species' impressive passage in 2008 and 2009: 29 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (DTh), and 8 May at both Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV) and Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF, DP).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** All: 11 May *Woodbury* (GLV), 13 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), 6 on 16 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP), 20 May at McIntosh SP *Cerro Gordo* (JDL), and 21 May at Cedar L Linn (BT).

**Sanderling:** Numbers were down with their regular presence on the beaches at Saylorville Res *Polk* disrupted by flooding, and they were only found at two locations: up to 6 birds from 2–11 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF, DP, BSc) and a single 8 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (JG).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** First: 6 at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JB) and 30 at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), both 30 Apr. Except for 117 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD) and 300 on 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), only 9 other birds were reported, the last 4 at Cedar L Linn at the end of the season (BT).

**Western Sandpiper:** A report of 3 on 11 May 2009 at Secret L *Fremont* (*Iowa Bird Life* 79:150) should be deleted.

**Least Sandpiper:** Arrived late and generally few in number. Most: 300 were part of the large gathering of shorebirds at Riverton WA *Fremont* 13 May (KDy), and 42 on 21 May in a flooded field *Chickasaw* (PH). Only fifteen additional birds were noted from 12 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) to 26 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** The first singles were spotted 2 May at both Maynard Reece WPA *Kossuth* (MCK) and Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (SJD). From 1–3 were noted from 3 other locations until the peak of 600 on 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). 78 could still be found 31 May at Dan Green Sl *Clay* (LAS).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** First: 3 on 3 Apr at Lamoni *Decatur* (JRL), where the peak of 12 was counted 12 Apr (NJM). From 1–3 were noted *Polk*, *Pottawattamie*, *Bremer*, and *Linn* until 21 May (JB, JG, DP).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** First: 8 on 28 Mar at Otter Creek M *Tama* (JF) and 3 on 31 Mar at Lewis Bottoms Rd *Linn* (BT). Most: 300 on 11 Apr at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), and 100–135 were seen *Decatur*, *Kossuth*, and *Polk* (NJM, MCK, SJD). The last was at USNWR *Kossuth* 26 May (MCK).

**Dunlin:** The first was in *Decatur* 5 Apr (JRL), and then not until 4 on 25 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP). Numbers peaked 8 May, when 100 were at Hawkeye WA (CRE) and 115 were at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (JG). The last were 4 on 26 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** First 18 Apr at Lamoni *Decatur* (DAK). There were quite varied encounters with this species, as with most of the shorebirds this spring: singles at three locations, 18 at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 52 at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), both 11 May, and the final 358 reported 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** The first was a single 5 May at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC) followed by 20 on 8 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (JG). The peak occurred three days later, when Steve Dinsmore counted 113 at Dunbar Sl. Last: 5 at Buffalo Basins *Franklin* (DP) and 13 in a flooded field *Chickasaw* (PH), both 21 May.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** First: 7 on

18 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and one on 20 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (TLu). The highest counts were made in central Iowa: 34 on 6 May *Madison* (SJD) and 54 on 8 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (JG). All other counts were of less than 10 birds. The final was in a flooded field *Polk* 14 May (JB).

**Wilson's Snipe:** The first were 4 in *Decatur* (NJM) and 19 at Ames *Story*, both 31 Mar (NJM, SJD). The largest group reported was 67 on 20 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (TMH).

**American Woodcock:** The first were 3 on 13 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), and 15 were displaying near L Rathbun *Appanoose* by 15 Mar (LAS). An adult with 4 downy young were found 6 May *Polk* (DK).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** First: 23 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR), and 50 at Dunbar Sl *Greene* and 46 at Mallard Flats *Madison*, both 29 Apr (both DTh). By the next day, there were 219 at Owego Wetlands (GLV). As expected, peak numbers were from the west: 224 on 2 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and 650 at that location 13 May (KDy). Farthest east, 6 were at Goose L *Clinton* 2 May (BT), and 86 made it to the Alden sewage lagoon *Hardin* 4 May (MPR). There were no reports of possible nesters lingering past mid-May.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Only 3 widely scattered individuals were reported: record early at Lamoni sewage lagoon *Decatur* 10 and 11 Apr (\*JRL, \*NJM), 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and 22 May at Trumbull L *Clay* (LAS).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** First: 6 on 1 Apr at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (JWR) and 3 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (DP). Most: 21 on 9 Apr at Saylorsville Res *Polk* (JG). Last: 11 May *Decatur* (NJM) and 7 on 12 May at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (BT).

**LAUGHING GULL:** An adult was

photographed 4 Apr below the Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (\*BE, \*JG) [second earliest].

**Franklin's Gull:** The first was in *Des Moines* 2 Apr (JWR), and then none were reported until 70 on 30 Apr at Swan Lake SP *Carroll* (MTW). 40 were still at Barringer Sl *Clay* 30 May (MCK).

**Ring-billed Gull:** Largely unreported. The high count of 62 were new migrants 6 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG). Six were still at Barringer Sl *Clay* 30 May (MCK).

**Herring Gull:** Four were newly arrived with Ring-billed Gulls 6 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG). High Counts were 60 on 14 Mar at Green Island WA *Jackson* (CRE) and 46 on 15 Mar below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (JG). The last was 25 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP).

**Thayer's Gull:** Up to 4 adults were at L&D 14 *Scott* the first week of Mar (SMF, JF, DP). One adult was at Cedar L *Linn* 13 Mar (JF).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** One adult was at L&D *Scott* 2 Mar (SMF).

**Glaucous Gull:** One or two were seen at L&D 14 *Scott* until 4 Mar (SMF, JF).

**Least Tern:** Only one was reported: 19 May at Rapp P *Page* (KDy).

**Caspian Tern:** First: 2 on 2 May *Decatur* (NJM). High count: 14 on 5 May at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc), and one was still at that location 31 May (BT).

**Black Tern:** The earliest were found in *Johnson*, *Woodbury*, and *Scott* 8 May (JF, MHB, GLV, WMZ). Most: 170 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), 146 on 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and 300 on 14 May at John Deere Dike *Dubuque* (CRE). Last: 35 on 21 May at Soap Creek WA *Davis* (CRE).

**Common Tern:** First: 3 on 8 May below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (SJD). Six other singles were noted until 21 May near Radcliffe *Hardin* (MPr).

**Forster's Tern:** First: 13 Apr at Little River RA *Decatur* (RIA, PHA) and 2 on 21 Apr at Cedar L *Chickasaw* (PH). Most: 32 on 30 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JB) and 35 on 14 May near Woodward *Dallas* (HZ).

**White-winged Dove:** All: 18 May at Waterloo *Black Hawk* (FLM-photo), 27 May at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (\*CJF), and from mid-Apr throughout the period at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy). Nesting was confirmed the first week of June at Shenandoah, the first for this species in Iowa (KDy- photo).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** First: 8 May at Effigy Mounds *Allamakee* (DC) and 14 May at Squaw Creek P *Linn* (BSc).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** First 1 May at both Yellow River SF *Allamakee* (CLW) and Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (CF) [second earliest].

**Barn Owl:** One was reported without details 23 Mar *Decatur* (NJM).

**BURROWING OWL:** One was seen 26 May near Caylor Pr *Dickinson* (Neil Bernstein fide SJD, Michael Sundberg- photo). A spring 2009 report was received too late for inclusion last year: one was photographed near Monona *Clayton* 12 May, 2009, by Dr. Paul Young.

**Long-eared Owl:** Only two were found: 6 Mar at Hooper WA *Warren* (JS) and one dead along a road 18 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy).

**Short-eared Owl:** Five near Fairfield *Jefferson* 4 Mar (Tim Franklin) were the most reported. Singles were noted Mar and Apr *Dallas*, *Appanoose*, *Jasper*, *Ringgold*, and *Kossuth* (KAVV, RLC, KVS, RIA, PHA, CJF, MCK).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** None reported.

**Common Nighthawk:** First: 3 on 5 May at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC) and 7 May at Davenport *Scott* (RAS). Only single digit totals were reported.

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Heard at two regular locations: 24 May near Tabor *Fremont* (KDy), and 30 May at Whitebreast Unit Stephens SF *Lucas* (DTh).

**Whip-poor-will:** First: 16 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and on 24 Apr, 10 were found singing at Green Hollow WA *Fremont* (KDy) and one was flushed near downtown Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (PH).

**Chimney Swift:** The first were noted over Ankeny *Polk* and Shenandoah *Page* 14 Apr (DAk, KDy).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** First: 20 Apr *Warren* (JG-details) [record early], and then 2 May *Muscatine* (POR).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Single migrant FOYs started being seen mid to late Apr, and only singles or pairs reported thereafter.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** The earliest arriving were singles 27 Mar at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr), 2 Apr at Squaw Creek P *Linn* (DP), and north to Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* 3 Apr (JB). Possible and confirmed nesters were found across the north in *Allamakee*, *Cherokee*, *Sioux*, *Woodbury*, *Fayette*, *Winnesheik*, and *Floyd* (DC, SJD, POR, CRE, JG, KVS).

**Northern Flicker:** Western red-shafted flickers were seen in *Woodbury* 3 and 24 Mar and 11 Apr (TLu, GLV). The regular gatherings of foraging migrants were unreported, and were actually never seen in *Kossuth* this spring (MCK).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** Increasingly found filling the region west to the upper Des Moines R, they were noted *Kossuth*, *Floyd*, *Chickasaw*, *Hancock*, and *Hamilton* (MCK, PH, JB, SJD, KVS). Jim Sinclair found adults feeding young 30 May *Warren*, the first confirmed nesting for that county.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** First: 5 May at Muskrat Sl *Jones* (TMH) and 9 May at Sawmill Hollow WA *Harrison* (JG). Last,

and the only report of more than one bird: 3 still in *Decatur* 31 May (NJM).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** The first was tracked down 2 May at Credit Island *Scott* (AMJ), and the next was 5 May at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (JWR).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** First: 15 May at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr) and 18 May *Smith* WA *Kossuth* (MCK). Four were found 23 May *Kossuth* (MCK). Last: 31 May at Seminole Valley P *Linn* (BT).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** First: 6 May *Decatur* (NJM), and then 2 on 15 May at Beam Woods *Jones* (CRE). One was singing outside their usual range 25 May at *Smith* WA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Alder Flycatcher:** First: 16 May at White WA *Cerro Gordo* (CJF) and 18 May at Hitchcock WA *Pottawattamie* (MOr). Most: 6 on 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* and 9 on 25 May at *Smith* WA *Kossuth* (both MCK). Few flycatchers lingered this year: the last Alders were found 28 and 29 May *Kossuth*, *Franklin*, and *Winnesheik* (MCK, JG).

**Willow Flycatcher:** First: 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), and then 17 May at both Squaw Creek P *Linn* (BSc) and Wolf Creek RA *Grundy* (MPr).

**Least Flycatcher:** First: 2 May at Cottonwood RA *Polk* (RLC) and 4 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (ICBC). Only 9 were reported total (Dennis Carter specifically noted seeing none), and the highest count for this usually common species was 3 on 9 May at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr). The last were 22 May at Geode SP *Henry* (CRE) and 25 May at *Smith* WA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Eastern Phoebe:** First: 2 on 14 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC) and 15 Mar in both *Des Moines* (CRE) and *Linn* (BT).

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** First: 27 Apr at Sycamore Access *Polk* (DAk) and 29 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Western Kingbird:** The first was recorded early 20 Apr *Fremont* (JLF, CF). The next were 9 May at both Tannery Ponds *Woodbury* (POR) and almost to the Mississippi R in *Louisa* (JWR, CF). A pair was also observed far to the east 18 May at Duck Creek Golf Course *Scott* (RAS). They were noted in central Iowa at both Grimes and the Capitol Complex *Polk* (JB, RIA, PHA).

**Eastern Kingbird:** First: 22 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 23 Apr *Fremont* (KDy). 34 were counted 9 May *Decatur* (NJM).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Fifteen singles were noted from the southern half of the state beginning 15 Mar, and a pair was seen 15 Apr *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), not a strong showing for this declining species.

**Northern Shrike:** All: 1 Mar *Henry* (CRE), 6 Mar *Warren* (JS), and 13 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (JG).

**White-eyed Vireo:** First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR). They were noted from eight counties south and east from *Polk*, and also *Clayton*, *Hardin*, *Franklin* (DK, TSS, JG), and to the west at Silver Sioux RA *Cherokee* (SJD-photo).

**Bell's Vireo:** First: 4 May at Rapp P Page (KDy), and 6 May at both Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS) and Cone M *Louisa* (JWR). Seven were found in *Polk* 28 May (DK).

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** One was singing record early 15 Apr in Steve Dinsmore's yard at Ames *Story*, but the next wasn't seen until 28 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** First: 24 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JB) and 29 Apr along the Little Sioux R *Buena Vista* (LAS). The most was 3 on 18 May *Decatur* (NJM), and the final were 19 May at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPR) and 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Warbling Vireo:** First: 24 Apr *Van Buren* (CRE, JWR).



*Western Kingbird*, Grimes, Polk, 13 May 2010. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Six individuals were reported from 12 May *Decatur* (NJM) to 19 May at McIntosh SP *Cerro Gordo* (JDL).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** First located by singing voice: one 24 Apr tied record early in *Decatur* (NJM-details). The next were 2 on 1 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE). The most reported were: 30 on 14 May at Mines of Spain SP *Dubuque* (CRE), 30 on 21 May at Lake Wapello SP *Davis* (CRE), and 27 on 22 May *Decatur* (NJM).

**BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE:** No reports.

**RAVEN sp:** A raven seen bathing 22 May in a flooded field *Fremont* (\*KDy) departed leaving questions about its neck feathers and point of origin.

**Purple Martin:** First: 27 Mar at Mt Sterling M *Van Buren* (RLC) and 31 Mar at

Osceola *Clarke* (Beth Brown). 85 in *Decatur* 11 May (NJM) was the only large gathering reported.

**Tree Swallow:** First: 3 on 11 Mar at Mt Sterling M *Van Buren* (JWR) [ties second earliest], 12 Mar *Marion* (DTh) [ties third earliest], and 14 Mar at Green Island WA *Jackson* (CRE, BSc). 1665 were counted 11 May below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (SJD).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** First: 2 on 5 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [ties second earliest] and 2 on 6 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (JWR) [ties third earliest]. The only large group reported was 70 on 25 Apr at Decorah *Winneshiek* (DC).

**Bank Swallow:** The first were 4 on 16 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and then 19 Apr at Gray's L *Polk* (JB).

**Cliff Swallow:** First: 9 Apr at Gray's L *Polk* (JB-details) [second earliest] and 7 on 12 Apr at Bentonsport Bridge *Van Buren* (JWR). Most: 575 on 7 May *Decatur* (NJM).

**Barn Swallow:** First: 2 Apr *Benton* and *Appanoose* (BT, JWR) and 7 Apr *Decatur* and *Polk* (NJM, JB).

**Tufted Titmouse:** A titmouse reappeared in Tucker's Bronson neighborhood *Woodbury* 17 Mar (TLu).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** From 1–4 were seen in eleven counties across the state, and 9 were found at Twin Ponds *Chickasaw* 3 Apr. They lingered until 13 May at Lake View *Sac* (PE), 15 May at L *Nodaway Adair* (SJD), and through the end of the period at *Algona Kossuth* (MCK). The pair at Riverview Cemetery, *Algona*, was discovered feeding recently fledged young the first week of June (MCK).

**Brown Creeper:** There wasn't a notable difference between wintering or migrant numbers this spring, giving little indication of peak movement. The last reports were 4 on 10 Apr at Mather's Woods *Floyd* (PH) and 11 Apr at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (DP).

**ROCK WREN:** One was discovered by Aaron Anholt at his farm in *Bremer* 2 May, and it remained to be seen by many until 15 May (\*Aaron Anholt, \*CRE).

**Carolina Wren:** Only reported from *Tama*, *Page*, *Polk*, and *Decatur*, with nesting at Waterloo *Black Hawk* (MPr, KDy, POR, DK, TSS). Time will tell if this short list reflects the ravages of a hard winter, or if the species just went largely unreported.

**BEWICK'S WREN:** The first was at Camp Wesley Woods *Warren* 4 Apr (JS-details). Only one wren was ever noted at the junkyard near Argyle *Lee* from 18 Apr through the end of the season (m.ob).

**House Wren:** First: 10 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and 12 Apr at both Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BSc) and in *Decatur* (NJM).

**Winter Wren:** First reported from Woodland Mounds *Warren* 28 Mar (JS), Call SP *Kossuth* 31 Mar (MCK), and Grammar Grove WA *Marshall*, also 31 Mar (MPr). The last were in *Decatur* 22 Apr (NJM) and at Beam Woods *Jones* 2 May (CRE). There were no reports of more than 2 birds.

**Sedge Wren:** First: 1 May at Dunbar *Sl Greene* (DP) and 9 on 2 May at Goose L *Clinton* (JG).

**Marsh Wren:** First: 19 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and then 3 on 28 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Singles and pairs were noted from 15 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) to 17 Apr at Volga River RA *Fayette* (CRE). Reports from 18 Apr and 22 Apr 2009 (*Iowa Bird Life* 79:157) in last year's report should be changed to 18 Mar and 22 Mar.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** The first was in the north at *Algona Kossuth* 31 Mar (MCK), and the last was in the south in *Decatur* 19 May (NJM). In between, only singles and pairs were reported.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** First: one 5

Apr *Decatur* tied record early (NJM), 10 were at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* 10 Apr (CRE), and 29 were found *Decatur* 13 Apr (NJM).

**Veery:** First: 9 May in both *Shelby* (SJD, JG) and *Decatur* (NJM), and 10 May *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). One or two were found in nine additional counties.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** The first were 4 on 3 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). From 1–3 were seen in a dozen other counties, and 20 nocturnal migrants were noted at *Grimes Polk* 16 May (JB). The final 2 were at *Twin Ponds Chickasaw* 21 May (PH).

**Swainson's Thrush:** First: 1 May in Chris Edwards' yard *Johnson* and Matt Wetrich's yard *Greene* (the farthest west reported). Small numbers were noted, except for 147 calls from overflying migrants during the night of 16 May at *Grimes Polk* (JB). Peak ground count of 12 was made the next morning at *Wolf Creek RA Grundy* (MPr). The last were found 26 May *Hancock* and *Marshall* (RGo, MPr), and 28 May at *Algona Kossuth* (MCK).



*Ruby-crowned Kinglet*, Boone, 7 April 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA

**Hermit Thrush:** First arrivals were 28 Mar at *Des Moines Polk* (KVS) and 4 Apr at *Pilot Knob SP Hancock* (JB). The peak migration period was noted by 6 on 13 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 5 on 14 Apr at *Twin Ponds Chickasaw* (PH). The final birds were 3 at *Gray's L Polk* (JB) and 1 at *Algona Kossuth* (MCK), both 28 Apr.

**Wood Thrush:** The first was heard at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* 24 Apr (JWR).

**Varied Thrush:** One paid a quick visit to the yard of Mark Lenz at *Whittemore Kossuth* 24 Apr (fide MCK).

**Gray Catbird:** First: 24 Apr *Warren* (JS) and 26 Apr at *McGowen RA Davis* (CRE).

**Northern Mockingbird:** All reports were south from a *Woodbury, Story, Clinton* line. Nathan Miller spotted 6 on 14 Apr *Decatur*.

**Brown Thrasher:** First: 1 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 2 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (JWR).

**American Pipit:** First found in flocks of 55 on 13 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), 42 on 21 Mar *Fremont* (KDy), and 100 on 26 Mar at *Otter Creek M Tama* (JF). Much smaller numbers were seen elsewhere, with the final 4 on 17 May *Hardin* (MPr) and a single 18 May at *Oak Grove P Sioux* (SJD).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Several birders noted their FOY at the IOU Spring Meeting *Scott* 1 and 2 May. All subsequent sightings were southeast from a *Fayette-Guthrie* line. A Lawrence's hybrid was found by Steven Ewer of *Middleton, WI* on 29

and 30 May at Yellow River SF Allamakee (FLM).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** First: 2 May at Credit Island *Scott* (MPr) and 4 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE). One or two were widely reported by many observers, even into the west in *Ida*, *Audubon*, and *Sioux* (PE, JG, SJD). Six were noted 6 May *Decatur* (NJM) and four on 14 May *Dubuque* (CRE), with the final migrant at Twin Ponds *Chickasaw* 21 May (PH). A Brewster's hybrid was at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* 10 May (JPa).

**Tennessee Warbler:** One was early 24 Apr at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr), and the next was 1 May at Credit Island *Scott* (JG, JB). Counts of 35 on 6 May *Decatur* (NJM) and 30 on 7 May *Henry* (CRE) were high considering the early dates. The species left early as well- last were singles 25 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK) and 26 May at Grammar Grove (MPr).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** First: 20 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 21 Apr at Volga River RA *Fayette* (MPr). Eleven were counted 29 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and then a total of only ten were noted the rest of migration. Last: 19 May at Diamond Lake WA *Dickinson* (MHB) and 22 May at Ada Hayden P (WO).

**Nashville Warbler:** One heard singing 17 Apr at Iowa City *Johnson* was the second earliest arrival date on record (JPa-details). The next were 3 on 24 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Peak location counts were 16 on 3 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JPa) and 10 on 7 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE). Last: 21 May at Lake Wapello SP *Davis* (CRE) and 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Northern Parula:** One singing 7 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CF) was record early, and then relocated 10 Apr (CRE). Three in *Decatur* 13 Apr (NJM) were also early. Four still at Stone SP *Woodbury* 18 May (POR) probably included breeding birds.

**Yellow Warbler:** First: 24 Apr at Mt Sterling M *Van Buren* (CRE) and 25 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (DP). 31 on 15 May at Voas Nature Center *Dallas* (TL) were the most reported.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** The first was a male at Smith L *Kossuth* 28 Apr (KCCB staff fide MCK) [record early], and then 5 May at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR). Highest numbers encountered were 10 on 19 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE) and 8 on 21 May at Lake Wapello SP *Davis* (CRE). Last: 29 May at Downing P *Fayette* (MPr) and 30 May at Wentland Woods *Floyd* (KVS).

**Magnolia Warbler:** Only 11 total birds reported from 4 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (ICBC) to 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Cape May Warbler:** The first were 6 on 7 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE), and the last were 6 on 21 May in one tree in *Chickasaw* (PH). In between, singles were noted in nine other counties.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** All: a fem 15 May at Squaw Creek P *Linn* (JF), a singing male 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) [third latest], and a male that sang all day 29 May at Jeff Nichols' residence *Boone* (DJN-photo) [record latest].

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** The first was 21 Mar *Fremont* (KDY), and the next was across the state 4 Apr at Forest City *Winnebago* (JB). Only one large group reported: 60 on 7 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE). Last: 18 May *Decatur* (NJM) and 2 on 19 May at Diamond Lake WA *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** First: 29 Apr at Bill Scheible's yard Cedar Rapids *Linn*, and 3 May in both *Dubuque* and *Polk* (CLW, JB). From 1–6 were noted in ten other counties west to *Ida*, *Shelby* and *Sac* (PE, JG). Last: 19 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE).



*Yellow-throated Warbler*, Martin A., Cherokee, 17 May 2010. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA

**Blackburnian Warbler:** First: 5 May at Wapsipinicon P Jones (TMH) and 3 on 7 May at Oakland Mills P Henry (CRE). One or two were found in counties across the state except for the far northwest, with a peak of 5 on 14 May at Mines of Spain SP Dubuque (CRE). Last: 21 May at Lake Wapello SP Davis (CRE) and 22 May at Macbride NRA Johnson (DP).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** Noted southeast from an Allamakee (FL), Hardin (SJD), Polk (JB) line, with a pioneering bird on 17 May staking out Martin Access Cherokee (SJD-photo). The highest concentration reported was 8 on 22 May at Geode SP Henry (CRE).

**Pine Warbler:** Two were reported: at a suet feeder at L Meyer Winneshiek 14 Apr (Larry Reis, DC), and 23 May through the end of the period at Donnellson Unit Lee (DP, JG-photo, RIC), the same location where breeding birds have been seen in recent years.

**Prairie Warbler:** A male was photo-

graphed 17 May at Moorehead P Ida (SJD).

**Palm Warbler:** First: 18 Apr at Jester P Polk (JB-details) [second earliest] and 24 Apr at Blackhawk Bottoms WMA Des Moines (JWR). Peak: 12 on 7 May at Oakland Mills P Henry (CRE) and 15 on 9 May at Huston P Palo Alto (LAS). Last: 15 May in Story, Jones, and Grundy (WO, CRE, MPr).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** All: 2 on 15 May at Beam Woods Jones (CRE), 17 May Decatur (NJM), 18 May at Hitchcock NA Pottawattamie (MOr), and 26 May at Grammar Grove WA Marshall (MPr).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** First: 27 Apr Decatur (NJM), and then 4 May at Hickory Hill P Johnson (CRE). Almost all reports were of single birds, including 9 May at Littlefield P Audubon in the west (JG). Most: 12 on 17 May Decatur (NJM). Last: 3 on 25 May at Smith WA Kossuth (MCK).

**Cerulean Warbler:** The first was singing 2 May in Chris Edwards' yard Johnson. Outside their usual range, one was seen 9 May Guthrie (SJD), 2 on 13 May along the Raccoon R Sac (PE), and 18 and 25 May at Smith WA Kossuth (MCK). The highest counts were in Mississippi R border counties as expected: 12 on 14 May at Mines of Spain SP Dubuque (CRE) and 6 on 24 May Allamakee (DK).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** The first was in the west 18 Apr at Sylvan Runkle



*Cattle Egret, Spirit L., Dickinson,  
18 May 2010. Photograph by  
Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA*



*Hooded Mergansers, Boone, 14 March 2010. Photograph  
by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA*



*Red-breasted Mergansers, Otter Creek P, Tama, 29  
March 2010. Photograph by Tom Schilke, Waterloo, IA*



*American White  
Pelican, Don Williams,  
L., Boone, 30 March  
2010. Photograph by  
Larry Dau, Boone, IA*



*White-faced Ibis, near Blue Flag M., Warren, 2 May 2010. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA*



*Swainson's Hawk, Harrier M., Boone, 14 May 2010. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA*



*Sora, Boone, 6 May 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA*

*Killdeer on nest, Snake Creek M., Greene, 15 May 2010. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA*





*Long-billed Dowitcher, Beaver Valley Wetlands, Black Hawk, 2 May 2010. Photograph by Tom Schilke, Waterloo, IA*



*Lesser Yellowlegs, Boone, 6 May 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA*



*Pileated Woodpecker at nest with young, Effigy Mounds N.M., Allamakee, 28 May 2010. Photograph by Tom Schilke, Waterloo, IA*



*Bell's Vireo, Woodbury, 17 May 2010. Photograph by Paul O. Roisen, Sioux City, IA*



*Summer Tanager, Woodbury, 18 May 2010.  
Photograph by Paul O. Roisen, Sioux City, IA*



*Bobolink, Boone, 6 May 2010. Photograph by  
Jim Moreland, Boone, IA*



*Indigo Bunting, Boone, 18 May 2010. Photograph  
by Larry Dau, Boone, IA*



*Northern Cardinal, Ames, Story, 23  
April 2010. Photograph by Matt Ste-  
phenson, Ames, IA*

Preserve *Monona* (AB). Few were reported, with 7 on 7 May at Oakland Mills SP *Henry* the most (CRE), and 23 May at USNWR *Kossuth* the last (MCK).

**American Redstart:** The first were at Nahant M *Scott* 1 May (JG, JB) and Croton Unit *Lee* 3 May (JWR). 75 redstarts on 14 May at Mines of Spain SP *Dubuque* (CRE) were especially notable given the general lack of warblers reported this spring.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** Their habitat was difficult to access in many areas because of spring flooding. They were noted north in the eastern half of the state to Sac and Fox Overlook *Hardin* 17 May (MPr) and 26 May at Buffalo Creek Access, the south outlet of USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** All: from 30 Apr through the period at Croton Unit *Lee* (m.ob.), 1 and 2 May at Wildcat Den SP *Muscatine* (m.ob. at IOU Spring Meeting), 5 May at Wapsipinicon SP *Jones* (TMH, JDL), 6–20 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE, JPa, JLF), and 17 May at Slip Bluff P *Decatur* (NJM).

**Ovenbird:** First: 24 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE) and 3 on 27 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Northern Waterthrush:** First: 24 Apr at Cottonwood RA *Polk* (KVS), and then 1 May at both Goose L *Clinton* (JWR) and Wildcat Den SP *Muscatine* (MPr). They were only reported from eight counties. Last: 23 May in my Algona backyard *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** The first was along Sycamore Rd *Des Moines* 31 Mar (JWR), and then 2 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). They were found north to a *Woodbury*, *Sac*, *Polk*, *Cerro Gordo*, *Winneshiek* line (POR, PE, DTh, RGo, DC).

**Kentucky Warbler:** One 24 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE) tied the record early date, and the next was seen by many the IOU Spring Meeting 1

and 2 May at Wildcat Den SP *Muscatine*. On 24 May, 7 were found *Allamakee* (DK) and 6 were at Croton Unit *Lee* (RIC, John Cecil).

**Connecticut Warbler:** An even dozen were reported 14–27 May from eleven counties in the eastern half of the state and Moorehead P *Ida* (PE).

**Mourning Warbler:** First: 10 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JPa) and 13 May at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB). Few were noted from seven additional counties, with the final 5 an unusually early 22 May in *Johnson*, *Marshall*, and *Henry* (CRE, MPr, KVS).

**Common Yellowthroat:** First: 26 Apr at Soap Creek WA *Davis* (CRE) and 28 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Karen Vista-Sparkman noted a FOY explosion of 40 yellowthroats at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* 3 May.

**Hooded Warbler:** All: 2 May at Credit Island *Scott* (AMJ, MPr), 5 May through the season at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (JWR, RIC, John Cecil, JG), 8 May at Sugar Bottom RA *Johnson* (CRE), 17 May at Grammar Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr), and 22 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE).

**Wilson's Warbler:** One or two were reported from a dozen counties from 6 May *Decatur* (NJM) to 22 May at Blackhawk Bottoms WMA *Des Moines* (JWR).

**Canada Warbler:** The first were in *Cerro Gordo*, *Grundy*, and *Story* 15 May (RGo, TSS, WO). Only 9 others were reported until 22 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Away from Croton Unit *Lee*, where up to 4 were noted 6 May through the end of the period: 7 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE), 2 on 16 May at Sherman P *Clinton* (CRE), 30 May at Wentland Woods *Floyd* (KVS), and 31 May at Cottonwood RA *Polk* (RIC).

**Spotted Towhee:** All: 21 Apr at Cherry Glen *Polk* (JG), 24 Apr near Red Oak



*Swamp Sparrow*, Welch L., Dickinson, 8 May 2010. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA

Montgomery (DCD), 29 Apr at Ames Story (SSP), 6 May near Sparks Cemetery Boone (LGD), and 18 May at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (MOr).

**Eastern Towhee:** First: 22 Mar *Jefferson* (CRE) and 31 Mar *Marshall* (MP). 24 were counted 13 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**American Tree Sparrow:** Last: 7 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 13 Apr at River Valley P Story (TMH).

**Chipping Sparrow:** Plentiful details were noted for an early bird at Johnston *Polk* 19–20 Mar (DTh), and the next was 30 Mar Cedar Rapids *Linn* (DLF).

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** First noted *Decatur* 26 Apr (NJM) and 3 on 27 Apr at Gray's L *Polk* (JB). From 1–7 migrants were reported from ten counties until 15 May, and possible late May nesters were seen *Howard*, *Mitchell*, *Winneshiekie*, and *Kossuth* (Larry Reis, KVS, JG- photo, MCK).

**Field Sparrow:** The first was heard 1 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and 9 were found 3 Apr

at *Waubonsie SP Fremont* (KDy). 45 were counted *Decatur* 13 Apr (NJM).

**Vesper Sparrow:** First: 2 on 2 Apr at Forest City *Winnebago* (JB) and 2 on 3 Apr at *Waubonsie SP Fremont* (KDy).

**Lark Sparrow:** The first were 2 on 12 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy) [ties second earliest] and 14 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [ties third earliest]. Most: 15 on 2 May *Cherokee* (DB). Two were found north to *Mitchell* 30 May (CJF).

**Savannah Sparrow:** First: 12 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 17 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** First: 2 on 10 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [ties third earliest], and singles 13 Apr in both *Ringgold* (Torre Hovick) and *Jasper* (JPa).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** First: 8 Apr at Kellerton Grasslands *Ringgold* (TMH), 12 Apr at Hawthorne WA *Mahaska* (CRE), and 8 on 12 Apr near Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (JWR, CF). A conservatively estimated 50 were heard at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* through the season (KVS), a heartening indication of their population increase in the state. They were heard in seven additional counties north to 30 May near Wentland Woods *Floyd* (KVS).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** All: 31 Mar *Des Moines* (CF), 4 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), 3 on 17 Apr at Diehl Wetlands *Warren* (JG), 6 May at Jennett WA *Story* (HZ), and 15 May at Snake Creek M *Greene* (SJD).

**Nelson's Sparrow:** One on 15 May at Snake Creek M *Greene* (JDL) was the only report.

**Fox Sparrow:** First: 7 Mar at L&D *Scott* (DP), 13 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), and 14 Mar *Clinton* (CRE). Reported in very low numbers, with a high count of 12 on 31 Mar at Twin Ponds *Chickasaw* (PH). Last: 29 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (DTh).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** First: 2 on 7 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY), 17 Apr at Dudgeon L *Benton* (BT), and 18 Apr at Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (JG). Other reports were of 1 or 2 birds until 16 May at Dunbar SI *Greene* (SJD).

**White-throated Sparrow:** There was wide disparity between the high count of 165 on 6 May in *Decatur* (NJM), and the second highest of 12 on 24 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE). Last: 6 on 15 May *Cerro Gordo* (CJF) and 19 May at Wolf Creek RA *Grundy* (MPr).

**Harris's Sparrow:** A single 14 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC) was followed by 4 on 11 Apr at Kellerton Grasslands *Ringgold* (TMH). Most: 18 on 4 May *Decatur* (NJM). Last: 4 on 14 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), 2 on 14 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), and 15 May at Liscomb *Marshall* (MPr).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** First: 17 Mar at Cone M *Louisa* (DP) and 14 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 13 on 12 May *Decatur* (NJM). Last: 19 May at Wolf Creek RA *Grundy* (MPr) and 22 May *Decatur* (NJM).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** Various "Oregon" types were observed during Mar in *Woodbury*, *Linn*, and *Kossuth* (TLu, BSc, MCK). The last Slate-colored were 26 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and a lingerer at Wickiup NA *Linn* 15 May (BT).

**Lapland Longspur:** Flocks of 100 or more were noted *Hardin*, *Winnebago*, and *Cerro Gordo* (MPr, JB, RGo), and 1000 were found 31 Mar *Kossuth* and 11 Apr *Muscatine* (MCK, DP). Two were still in *Jasper* 17 Apr (JG), after which they only frequented *Kossuth*: 300 on 21 Apr at Waltman WPA dwindled to a late single on 2 May (MCK).

**Smith's Longspur:** Noted from a handful of locations: 2 on 13 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), 2 on 28 Mar at Wilson WPA *Clay* (LAS), up to 40 were

found 10–17 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (m.ob.), and 8 on 21 Apr climbed to 100 on 2 May at Waltman WPA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Snow Bunting:** 70 on 4 Mar declined to 20 on 6 Mar along the same *Kossuth* road (MCK), and 1–3 were found until 13 Mar *Jefferson*, *Henry*, *Tama*, and *Worth* (CRE, DP, CJF).

**Summer Tanager:** First: 30 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (CF), followed by 2 May *Scott* (AB). Most: 16 on 17 May *Decatur* (NJM). Three on 29 May at Waubonsie SP *Fremont* (AB) were in a regular nesting area, but others outside the southeastern quarter of the state included 9 May *Guthrie* (SJD), a pair 18 May at Stone SP *Woodbury* (POR), and a wandering 1<sup>st</sup> year male at Algona *Kossuth* 29 May–1 June (Sharon Arndorfer- photo).

**Scarlet Tanager:** The first were 3 on 1 May at Oakland Mills P *Henry* (CRE).

**WESTERN TANAGER:** A male was photographed 9 May at Credit Island *Scott* (\*William Hickerson). A late photo was received of another spring 2009 male Western Tanager coming to a feeder: 25 May, 2009, at Missouri Valley *Harrison* (\*Viola Michrina).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** First: 24 Apr at both North Liberty *Johnson* (RJH) and Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE), and 25 Apr at Algona *Kossuth* (Connie Ristau fide MCK).

**Blue Grosbeak:** Appeared in the western border counties 14–18 May (GLV, POR, SJD, KDy), followed by the return of the Carroll *Carroll* residents, which peaked at 7 on 28 May (RTh). A single was found in the southeast 24 May just inside *Van Buren* near the *Lee* line (RIC, John Cecil).

**Indigo Bunting:** First: 29 Apr in *Decatur* and *Clinton* (NJM, TMH), and then 1 May in *Henry* and *Scott* (CRE, MPr). Most: 12 on 14 May at Mines of Spain *Dubuque*

(CRE), and 15 on 22 May at Liscomb Marshall (MPR).

**Dickcissel:** First: 1 May *Decatur* (NJM) and 2 on 4 May *Des Moines* (JWR). The highest concentration reported was 11 in northern *Pocahontas* 31 May (JN).

**Bobolink:** The first was singing overhead 22 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [second earliest] and then 29 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (DTh). Most: 56 were found *Decatur* 11 May (NJM), and 14 at Ottosen Potholes *Humboldt* 31 May (JN).

**Red-winged Blackbird:** The first flocks were 45 on 4 Mar *Polk* (JG), 25 on 6 Mar *Warren* (JS), and 120 on 6 Mar *Des Moines* (BT). 20,000 were moving into *Polk* 10 Mar and a flock estimated at 65,000 was noted 13 Mar *Warren* (both JG).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** First: 7 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), and then 2 at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB) and 6 at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose*, both 13 Mar (JB, RLC).

**Western Meadowlark:** The first reported was 12 Mar near Grimes *Polk* (JB).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** First: 4 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (BE) and 2 on 7 Apr at Knutson Pond *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). 200 were noted 2 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Rusty Blackbird:** First: 3 on 6 Mar along Sullivan Slough Rd *Des Moines* (BT) and 8 on 6 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC). Some large flocks were found in central and western Iowa 13–21 Mar: 233 in *Warren* (JG), 130 in *Polk* (JB), 300 in *Dallas* (TL), and 300 in *Fremont* (KDy). Observations in eastern Iowa were quite different: targeted searching for this species 14 Mar in *Jackson* yielded only 2 birds (BSc, CRE), and Chris Edward's season high was only 8.

Last: 10 on 12 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and a lonesome single 23 Apr at L Lashane *Decatur* (NJM).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** The first report was 15 on 13 Mar *Warren* (JG), and the last was 5 females 26 Apr *Davis* (CRE). In between were fourteen reports of 1–24 birds from across the state without any details for this elusive blackbird.

**Common Grackle:** 33,000 were part of the massive blackbird flock in *Warren* 13 Mar (JG).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Reported only from the southern half of the state east to *Tama* and *Johnson*, with high counts of 35 on 13 Mar *Warren* (JG), 19 on 19 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and 17 on 23 May at Forney L *Fremont* (KDy).

**Orchard Oriole:** The first were noted 30 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 1 May *Decatur* (NJM). Only singles were reported from nine other counties.

**Baltimore Oriole:** First: 27 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and 29 Apr in both *Ringgold* (PDBS) and *Polk* (DAk).

**Purple Finch:** 4 Mar singles, 6 Apr singles, and singles 8 May in *Hamilton*, *Decatur*, and *Story* (JG, NJM, TMH). The Ames *Story* bird lingered until 14 May (TMH), and then the final finch frequented Chris Edwards' feeder *Johnson* 20–22 May [record latest].

**Pine Siskin:** All: 1–3 from 24 Mar to 12 May at a Sioux City *Woodbury* feeder (GLV), 14 Apr at a Mason City *Cerro Gordo* feeder (CJF), and 14 May at a Cedar Rapids *Linn* feeder (BT).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** Only reported from Cone M *Louisa* (DP, BSc) and Iowa City *Johnson* (MHB).

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Ann Johnson	AMJ	Norwalk			
Matthew Kenne	MCK	Algona	Thank you all for your contributions to this effort.		
Darwin Koenig	DK	Ankeny			
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# **Bird Records of the Long Expedition, 1819–1820, along the Missouri River in Iowa and Nebraska**

*Thomas H. Kent*

## **BACKGROUND**

Meriwether Lewis in 1804 was the first naturalist to document birds in Iowa (and presumably Nebraska). President Jefferson sent Lewis to Philadelphia to learn from Dr. Benjamin Smith Barton how to describe and preserve natural history specimens. The success of this brief training can be seen in Lewis's descriptions of American White Pelican, Great Egret, and Least Tern (Kent 2003). Lewis and Clark spent 39 days on the Missouri River in Iowa/Nebraska during their travels to the Pacific Ocean and back in 1804 and 1806 (Kent 2003). Six other species noted by Lewis and other members of the expedition (Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Piping Plover, Carolina Parakeet, and Wild Turkey) were considered as probable Iowa records (Kent 2003).

The many travelers on the Missouri River before Lewis and Clark and up to 1819 did not leave records of the birds that they saw. This includes three noted botanists, Thomas Nuttall (Graustein 1967), John Bradbury (1814), and Henry Marie Brackenridge (1819), who travelled up the Missouri River to North Dakota and back with Manual Lisa of the American Fur Company and Wilson Price Hunt of the Astoria Expedition to Oregon in 1811. All three collected many new species of plants, but failed to mention even one bird in "Iowa". Bradbury and Brackenridge wrote extensive descriptions of their trips and Nuttall would later write the first definitive text on American plants (1817–1819) and the second on American birds (1832, 1834).

Iowa ornithology was off to a slow start, but a great opportunity lay ahead with the Long Expedition of 1819–1820. John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, created the "Yellowstone" Expedition to build a fort at the mouth of the Yellowstone in Montana to protect trappers from the Indians and ward off the British from U.S. territory. There were high expectations for this second major U.S. Government expedition into Louisiana Territory. The scientists were to study climate, natural history, and the Indians.

## **THE LONG EXPEDITION TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS**

The military component of the expedition under Colonel Henry Atkinson was slowed by five new steamboats that had trouble navigating the Missouri River. Troops were forced to overwinter at Cantonment (a temporary or semi-permanent military quarters) Missouri in "Nebraska", where many died from scurvy (Vitamin C deficiency). The military component of the Yellowstone Expedition was withdrawn in 1820 due to lack of progress, scurvy, and a national depression.

The scientific/exploratory component under Major Stephen H. Long fared better. Long

personally designed a steam boat, the Western Engineer, which made it to Engineer Cantonment south of Council Bluff (the Nebraska site where Lewis and Clark met the Indians) and north of the Cantonment Missouri.

The scientists left Pittsburgh on the Western Engineer on 5 May 1819, and wintered at Engineer Cantonment from 19 September 1819 to 6 June 1820. For the next three and a half months they traveled to the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, and back along the Arkansas and Canadian Red rivers, and then overland, reaching Cape Girardeau, Missouri on 12 October 1820.

## THE SCIENTISTS

Unlike the Lewis and Clark expedition, the Long expedition comprised qualified naturalists, geologists, and artists. See Evans (1997) for a full list of the participants and description of the trip.

Major Stephen H. Long (1784–1864) was well suited as commander of the expedition. He graduated from Dartmouth College, taught school at various locations including Philadelphia (where he became acquainted with the American Philosophical Society) and West Point (where he taught mathematics), invented machinery, did some surveying in his spare time, and participated in government fact finding missions along the Mississippi and its tributaries. After guiding the expedition to Engineer Cantonment, Long returned east (11 October 1819 to 27 May 1820) to get new orders, leaving Thomas Say in charge.

After the Long Expedition, Long continued his military engineering career until 1863, working as a consultant to railroads, improving navigation of the Mississippi River, and ending his career as commander of the Topographical Engineers.

Thomas Say (1787–1834) was a fourth generation Quaker (Weiss and Ziegler 1931, Stroud 1992). His father and grandfather were physicians, and he was related on his mother's side to John Bartram the botanist and William Bartram the naturalist. Say owned a failing apothecary with his father. His zoological interests developed rapidly as co-founder, curator, and editor of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. He made another expedition with Long in 1823 to Minnesota, touching northeastern Iowa on the way. Say's major interest was entomology, and he became "father" of that science with the publication of *American Entomology* (1824–1828). He also published *American Conchology* (1830–1834). He spent his final eight years at the utopian colony at New Harmony, Indiana.

Edwin James (1797–1861), a physician, botanist, and geologist was invited to replace the noted William Baldwin, who died of tuberculosis at Franklin, Missouri, on the outbound trip. Long, James, and Captain John R. Bell crossed southeastern Iowa on horseback from 23 to 27 May 1820. Although James' time in Iowa was minimal, he was the author of the major account of the expedition (James 1823a, b, Thwaites 1905). A heated room provided by Long facilitated a prompt report (versus the long delay in the Lewis and Clark publications). James continued as an Army surgeon for 14 years. He was a champion of Indian and Black causes, and retired on an Iowa farm.

Titian Peale (1799–1885), son of Charles Willson Peale, the founder of the first American natural history museum, was assistant naturalist, taxidermist, and artist of the expedition. He kept a journal up to St. Charles, Missouri with mention of birds. Peale's diary ends abruptly with "to be continued". Failure to find more volumes of Peale's journal remains a

mystery. Peale was artist and naturalist for many expeditions and later worked in the U.S. Patent Office.

Captain John R. Bell, a West Pointer, was recruited by Long to replace Major Thomas Biddle, who had failed in his duty as the journalist for the expedition. Bell fixed that, he produced an excellent journal, but did not turn it over to Secretary Calhoun or make it available to James. Bell died 5 years after the expedition and after his retirement. His journals were discovered in California in 1952 and published (Fuller and Hafen 1957).

## ENGINEER CANTONMENT

The winter location at Engineer Cantonment included a comfortable structure built by the expedition and located on the west bank of the Missouri River five miles below Council Bluff. Four miles below this point was Cantonment Missouri where the military group under Major Atkinson overwintered. Opposite Engineer Cantonment and downstream three miles was the mouth of the Boyer River (in Iowa). Manual Lisa's trading post was less than a mile downstream from Engineer Cantonment.

In 1819–1820 Iowa and Nebraska were not yet states and the boundary between them was not precisely defined until 1943. The boundary was then defined as the middle of the Missouri River as of 1940—a moving target (Kent 1985). Shimek (1912), who was interested in the location of Say's type specimens of plants, mollusks, and insects, determined that the Missouri River, which was close to west bank in Say's time, had moved five miles to the east. That means that birds flying over the river at the time of the Long Expedition would be in today's Nebraska.

## BIRD REPORTS FROM THE LONG EXPEDITION

Most of the information on birds of the expedition comes from the James' account (James 1823a, b, Twaites 1905). Appendix A contains two lists attributed to Say: a list of species (143 attributed to Engineer Cantonment without dates) and a list of early and late departure dates for the outward journey and for the cantonment, most with dates and places. A few birds are mentioned in the text and footnotes of the James account. Bell (Fuller and Hafen 1957) mentions species seen in southwestern Iowa on his trip to the cantonment, including a map with campsites, proving that they were in "Iowa". Thomas Say's "Notes on birds," (mentioned by Weiss and Ziegler 1931) was a thrill to find after much Internet searching and e-mails. Copies of the seven small irregular pages were kindly provided by The Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

Almost all of the birds reported in these documents can be rejected as valid Iowa sighting for the following reasons:

1. Not in Iowa. If the calculations of Shimek (1912) are correct, birds at the Cantonment would have been five miles from present-day Iowa. The few birds that were clearly in Iowa are detailed below.
2. A number of species on the main list are unlikely (Long-tailed Duck, Brown Pelican, Laughing Gull, Gull-billed Tern, and Northern Hawk Owl).
3. Identification would have suffered from lack of optical equipment; collecting was the mode of the day. I did not locate any specimens, which most likely would have gone to



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## Carolina Parakeet:

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"A few flocks remained on the Missouri as high as Eng. Cant. and were occasionally seen. They were not driven off although the thermometer was at one time 26 below zero. They feed during the winter on the seeds of the *Platanus occidentalis* [sycamore]. Tree is to be found between Eng. Cant. & Bowyer Creek"

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There are several reports of birds on the Missouri River, which were likely in Nebraska and could have been in Iowa, including geese [Canada Goose], swans [Trumpeter Swan], ducks [Mallard], Osprey, Whooping Crane, and Franklin's Gull (4 May 1820, flocks). Of the 260 entries on Say's primary list, a number of species are of historical interest (Ruffed Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Whooping Crane, Long-billed Curlew, Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet, Black-billed Magpie, Common Raven (nest). American Avocet on 20 February 1820 is an unlikely date.

James (1823 Philadelphia edition, Preliminary Notice, pp. 35–38) indicates, "Description of the greater number of the animals and plants collected on the Expedition, remain to be given. These may be expected to appear from time to time, either in periodical journals or in some other form." There is no indication that James was referring to birds.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thomas Say is important because he was the first professional naturalist to visit Iowa, and he left a long list of birds "observed at Engineer Cantonment, or at other indicated places" that have often been included in subsequent Iowa lists without convincing evidence for identification or location in Iowa. I suspect that Say made up the main list from Wilson's *American Ornithology* and James accepted it without mentioning the word "hypothetical". The next Iowa list by J. A. Allen (1870) more obviously contains hypothetical birds not seen by Allen. These two noted authorities have been often quoted, as recently as 1984 (Dinsmore et al. 1984).

The Long Expedition is disappointing as a source of early Iowa bird records, partly because of lack of interest in "state birds" or in detailed record keeping. Say's journal and specimens for the trip to Colorado and back were stolen by three members of the party and never recovered. I thought that Say would have recorded more notes of birds in Iowa and Nebraska in his "notes on birds". These notes conform to his note taking style (later described by his wife) and must have been sent back from Engineer Cantonment. The most significant records were Surf Scoter (documented in detail but unidentified), Long-billed Dowitcher (documented as a type-specimen, now lost; the only bird species first described to science from a specimen collected in Iowa), and Carolina Parakeet (seen while ascending Missouri River and near the Boyer River).

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# Report of the Records Committee for 2009

*Ann M. Johnson*

Two species were added to the Iowa checklist in 2009. Violet-green Swallow (#421) was discovered in northwest Iowa in the spring and Fulvous Whistling-Duck (#422) was added after reconsideration of a record from 1994. The value of constantly upgrading our data to Internet applications was very evident in evaluating this old record. Extra-limital reports are frequently judged based on patterns of species vagrancy. In 1994 this information was limited and not easily obtainable. Today the analysis of records from surrounding states and across the country has become fairly straightforward with a minimal amount of searching.

A total of 42 reports were reviewed during the year. A number of other documentations were reviewed by the seasonal field reports editors for supporting evidence of reported observations. The committee thanks everyone for timely submission of reports so that our publications offer the most current information available on Iowa avian populations.

Committee members for 2009 with years in which their terms expire were: Matt Kenne (2009), Paul Hertzell (2010), Stephen J. Dinsmore (2011), Rita Goranson (2012), Ross Silcock (2013), Chris Edwards (2014) and Ann Johnson (secretary, appointed by the committee). Aaron Brees was nominated by the committee and subsequently appointed by the Board of Directors to fill a regular term beginning in 2010.

Status changes to the Iowa checklist are based on the number of reports during the previous ten years. Some changes are straight-forward based on criteria while others could go one of two ways and require discussion by the committee before making any change. The following status changes were approved at the annual committee meeting on 1 November 2009: Barrow's Goldeneye, Neotropic Cormorant, Brown Pelican, and Painted Bunting move from accidental to casual; and Whimbrel moves from casual to regular. It was agreed that Field Reports editors should continue to ask for identifying details on reports of bubble species that are now regular: Red-throated Loon, Yellow Rail, Whimbrel, and Black-billed Magpie. Reports of the magpie and any Black-headed Gull outside of the regularly known locations should be fully documented. There was discussion about how to treat consecutive year records such as the annual reports of Black-headed Gull or the Painted Bunting that apparently returned to Ames. Because there is no way to be absolutely certain of an individual bird's identity, it was concluded that such records would stand on their own merits based on the standard criteria used.

The Breeding Bird Atlas project contributed to a new addition to Iowa's breeding birds. A breeding Alder Flycatcher was recorded in 2009 in a Dallas County BBA block (Dinsmore 2009a). This species has now been added as a breeder with the level of evidence as A-R. The recording has been archived with other IOU Records Committee material at Iowa State University.

The committee continues to struggle with several reports containing sketchy descriptions. Nothing is more important for maintaining a record of Iowa's rare bird life than a complete description of the bird in question and why it was different from a more expected

species. The committee's charge is *not* to validate an individual's sighting but to agree that the tangible evidence will withstand scrutiny years from now. Even poor photos accompanying a written description can help support a document. A workshop on writing acceptable documentations was presented at the 2009 spring IOU meeting. The committee welcomes other ideas from the membership to help make documenting rare birds less daunting and more fun for the observer.

Each record reviewed by the Records Committee is assigned a six-digit number (year and sequence number), which is included in this report for future reference. Records are classified as follows: A = Accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D = documentation) and NA = Not Accepted. To be accepted, a record must receive 7 votes on the initial review or 6 votes on a subsequent review. The subcategories A-S, A-P, and A-R indicate that physical evidence supports the identification, and records are sub-classified based on a majority vote. References to *Iowa Bird Life (IBL)* are the page of the Field Reports or a special note in *Iowa Bird Life* where the record is cited. Published notes and previous citations may contain more details. An \* indicates a previously uncited documentation.

In the past, a separate photo file was maintained by the Records Committee. With the proliferation of digital images being submitted, as well as documentations having unique identification numbers, these photos are now being archived as a part of the documentation and are not assigned a separate number. The classification in the entries below will indicate the presence of an identifiable photo with the record.

A number of significant records that would add to our knowledge of Iowa birds are unfortunately missed each year. Good photos should at least have some minimal details entered to identify who, what, when and where. Written documentations are more difficult and, as a lower level of evidence, require more detail and logic to be accepted for use by future researchers. The committee relies on the observer to paint a picture with words of what was seen and how it was identified. This is seldom available from listserv posts or brief details submitted with seasonal field reports. A few documented details on size and structure, along with a description of what was seen and consideration of any similar species, can make all the difference between an accepted and not accepted report. The committee can only evaluate the evidence that is submitted.

#### 2009 RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** 30 Apr at Diamond L. in *Poweshiek* (2009-12, A-P, IBL 79:138); 1 May at Hobbs Pits in *Carroll* (2009-25, A-P, IBL 79:138) and 23 Sep near Fort Madison in *Lee* (2009-31, A-P, IBL 80:4).

**Mottled Duck:** 8 Jul to 5 Aug at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2009-28, A-P, IBL 79:194, 80:5 [Dinsmore 2009b]).

**Neotropic Cormorant:** 5 Jul at Elm L. in *Wright* (2009-27, A-P, IBL 79:196 [Dinsmore 2009c]).

**Black Vulture:** 24 Feb at Des Moines in *Polk* (2009-02, A-D, IBL 79:81 [Johnson 2009]).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** 24 Mar near Lacey-Keosauqua State Park in *Van Buren* (2009-05, A-D, IBL 79:145).

**King Rail:** 6 Aug at Chichaqua WA in *Polk* (2009-39, A-D, IBL 80:9).

**Snowy Plover:** 24 Apr at Dairy Pond in *Woodbury* (2009-08, A-P, IBL 79:147, 79(3) cover [Roisen 2009]) and 25–26 Apr at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2009-09, A-P, IBL 79:147 [Bissell 2009]).

**Whimbrel:** 15 May at Forney L. in *Fremont* (2009-18, A-P, IBL 79:149) and 23 Aug at Hawkeye WA in *Johnson* (2009-38, A-D, IBL 80:11).

**Ruff:** 28 Apr at Cone Marsh in *Louisa* (2009-11, A-P, IBL 79:151).

**Burrowing Owl:** 12 May in *Monona* (2009-30, A-P, \*Paul Young).

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher:** 25-27 Apr at Dysart in *Tama* (2009-10, A-P, IBL 79:155 [Gregory and Dinsmore 2009]).

**Black-billed Magpie:** 19 Oct at Hitchcock WA in *Pottawattamie* (2009-36, A-D, IBL 80:15).

**Violet-green Swallow:** 14 May at Harwarden in *Sioux* (2009-07, A-P, IBL 79:156 [Reinking and Hollinga 2009]).

**Mountain Bluebird:** 3-4 Apr at Camp Mitigwa in *Boone* (2009-06, A-P, IBL 79:157 [Johansen 2009]).

**Sprague's Pipit:** 16 May at Lower Hamburg Bend in *Fremont* (2009-20, A-D, IBL 79:159 [Viste-Sparkman 2009]).

**Western Tanager:** 9-10 May at Cherokee in *Cherokee* (2009-14, A-P, IBL 79:167, 168) and 15 May at Shell Rock Greenbelt in *Cerro Gordo* (2009-19, A-P, IBL 79:167).

**Chestnut-collared Longspur:** 24 Oct in *Kossuth* (2009-37, A-D, IBL 80:25 [Gregory 2010]).

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** 13 May at Story City in *Story* (2009-15, A-P, IBL 79:170); 14 May in *Woodbury* (2009-16, A-D, IBL 79:170); 17 May at Spark's Cemetery in *Boone* (2009-21, A-P, IBL 79:170); 17-18 May at Sioux City in *Woodbury* (2009-22, A-P, IBL 79:170); and 19 May at Sioux Center in *Sioux* (2009-24, A-D, IBL 79:170).

**Lazuli Bunting:** 5-7 May at Des Moines in *Polk* (2009-13, A-P, IBL 79:170 [Cigelman 2009]).

**Hoary Redpoll:** 31 Jan to 15 Feb at Mason City in *Cerro Gordo* (2009-01, A-D, IBL 79:87 [Fischer 2009]).

## OLD RECORDS REVIEWED FOR FIRST TIME

**Gyr Falcon:** 19 Jan 2001 at Waterman Twp. in *O'Brien* (2009-AA, A-D, \*Darwin Koenig).

## OLD RECORDS RE-REVIEWED

**Fulvous Whistling-Duck:** 17 Jul to 8 Sep 1994 at Goose L. in *Clinton* (2009-41 [94-22], A-P, IBL 64:107 [Kent 1995]).

## 2009 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** Although this record was possibly a correct ID, the lack of description of the bird beyond bill color made it difficult for the committee to conclusively evaluate (2009-03).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse:** A bird briefly seen without aid of optics left the description short of the details necessary to assure a correct ID. The location, well away from the reintroduction in the Loess Hills, also raised doubts about the wildness if the identity was indeed correct (2009-35).

**Glossy Ibis:** The reporter's admitted lack of seeing details of facial skin left this record unidentified to species (2009-26).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** This March record created much discussion because of the difficulty in differentiating between Ferruginous and Krider's Red-tailed Hawk without several convincing details being described. The committee consulted with a raptor expert who believed the report appeared to describe a juvenile Ferruginous Hawk but was also concerned that the some important field marks such as feathered tarsi, gape color, and location of white wing patches were not described. This response resulted in a conservative vote (2009-04).

**Gyr Falcon:** Interpretations of details from a brief view of a potential Gyr Falcon varied among committee members and the vote was split with a leaning toward a conservative conclusion (2009-34).

**Whooping Crane:** A bird described as completely white was most likely a Great Egret (2009-33).

**Monk Parakeet:** Photos clearly indicated a correct identification but there is no evidence it was from an established population rather than an escaped bird. Observers should continue to report this species as it could become established in Iowa in the future (2009-40, *IBL* 80:23).

**Connecticut Warbler:** The identity of an unusual July *Oporornis* warbler was inconclusive but felt by most to be more likely Mourning with a strong eye-ring (2009-29).

**McCown's Longspur:** In a split vote the committee did not accept a first state record that was very dependent on the ob-

server's ability to distinguish the call notes of this species from a Chestnut-collared Longspur, neither of which was overly familiar to the observer (2009-32).

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** Identity was established a couple of days after the sighting which the observer knew was an unfamiliar bird but was unsure of the identification. Consequently, descriptive details of the bird were suggestive but not detailed enough to rule out the competition (2009-17).

**Scott's Oriole:** A more detailed description addressing key points was necessary to determine that this sighting was indeed a Scott's versus a more likely young Orchard or a Baltimore with yellow pigment, the latter having been recorded in Iowa a few times in recent years (2009-23).

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I thank Paul Hertzell for reviewing this report and checking all of the inclusive dates against field reports data so that this report is an accurate representation of rare bird sightings in Iowa.

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# Black Rail in Kossuth County

*Jonathan D. Lautenbach*

On 28 May 2010 I was working at Union Slough Nation Wildlife Refuge conducting call-broadcast surveys in the northern part of the refuge. I was at my second point for the morning and I was 3 minutes into the survey when I heard *ee-ee-ERRR* call in the cattails about 20 meters in front of me. At first I did not recognize the call, but after a couple of minutes it registered in my brain that what I had heard was a Black Rail. Once I finished my survey I immediately began playing the Black Rail call on my mp3 player. After playing the call for a couple minutes with no response I decided to leave the bird alone and headed to my next point. Upon hearing the recording I confirmed that I had indeed heard a Black Rail. The bird was only heard, so I was not able to get visual confirmation, but the call was enough to eliminate other rail species. The different pitch of the call and its three note character, differing from the four-note *tic-tic-tic McGrerr* call, eliminated a Virginia Rail. The call was much clearer than that of a King Rail and it did not end with a rattle like the *chic-chic-chrrrrr* call of a King Rail; again, the pitch was not right for a King Rail.

This represents the 12th accepted record of a Black Rail in Iowa. Records are scattered in the period April to October, with a slight peak in May. I believe this represents the first occurrence of a calling Black Rail in Iowa, perhaps a sign that this individual was interested in breeding.

1525 Morewood Dr, Grand Rapids, MI 49508

# Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life*

James J. Dinsmore

A beautiful color painting by Earnest Steffen of a male and female Spotted Towhee (then called Arctic Towhee) provided the frontispiece for the September 1960 issue. The painting accompanied an article by William Youngworth discussing the occurrence of this species in Iowa.

In another article, Robert Vane described visiting a cave nest of a Turkey Vulture near Monticello in Jones County. The visit was memorable as he had to be careful to avoid Timber Rattlesnakes which also occupied the cave. Elton Fawks, a longtime birder in the Quad City region, discussed a series of counts he and others made of wintering Bald Eagles. He was especially concerned by what he considered the relative rarity of immature eagles in those counts. Finally, William Youngworth described some of the birds he saw during a May visit to Cayler Prairie in Dickinson County. Most were typical prairie birds but a Burrowing Owl was a special find.

The short notes included a report of Iowa's first Roseate Spoonbill at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge. The bird was filmed on 8-mm film, which amazingly was found and viewed by the Records Committee several decades later. Other contributions included several longer notes, each summarizing sightings from an area of the state (western Iowa by Dean Roosa, Iowa City by Fred Kent, and Waterloo by Russell Hays). Such summaries apparently were the start of what evolved into the field reports section that now is a popular feature of *Iowa Bird Life*.

This issue also marked the end of Fred Pierce's remarkable 30-year editorship of *Iowa Bird Life*. The fourth and last issue for 1960 included only the compilation of the 5-year index and thus Pierce's skills at producing this journal effectively ended with this, the third issue of 1960. At the end of that index, Pierce included a short note reporting his resignation and announcing that Peter Petersen would assume the job of Acting Editor in 1961. Pierce's editorship was remarkable not only for its longevity but also for his ability to find material for four issues every year and to get them published on a regular schedule. And he did this during both a great economic depression and the Second World War.

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# Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the Year Ending 31 December 2009

## IOU Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2009

	Dec 31, 09
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1150 Checking - 1st Citizens	17,347.95
Total Checking/Savings	17,347.95
Other Current Assets	
1350 CD - 1st Citizens	50,978.92
Total Other Current Assets	50,978.92
Total Current Assets	68,326.87
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>68,326.87</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Deferred Revenue	315.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	315.00
Total Current Liabilities	315.00
Total Liabilities	315.00
Equity	
3000 General Operating Fund	44,000.13
3300 Memorials	14,271.43
Fund Balances	
3200 Life Membership Fund	8,903.89
3210 Outside Projects Fund	794.60
3400 Publications Fund	4,137.22
Total Fund Balances	13,835.71
Net Income	-4,095.40
Total Equity	68,011.87
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>68,326.87</b>

**IOU**  
**Profit & Loss**  
January through December 2009

	Jan - Dec 09
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
5200 Meeting Income	6,508.00
5250 Bird Trip Fees	18,487.50
5300 Merchandise Sales	1,240.39
5350 Sales - Online	269.81
5450 Silent Auctions	159.00
5900 Interest Income	1,038.57
<b>Donations</b>	
5100 Donations - Unspecified	2,763.25
<b>Total Donations</b>	2,763.25
<b>Dues</b>	
4012 Fledgling Dues	12.00
4020 Goldfinch Dues	4,020.00
4035 Bluebird Dues	3,605.00
4050 Baltimore Oriole Dues	2,050.00
4075 Great Egret Dues	525.00
4100 Osprey Dues	1,500.00
4250 Bald Eagle Dues	500.00
4800 Institutions Dues	973.00
<b>Total Dues</b>	13,185.00
<b>Total Income</b>	43,651.52
<b>Expense</b>	
6200 Meeting Expenses	6,590.73
6210 Breeding Bird Atlas	530.10
6250 Bird Trip Expenses	18,331.99
6600 Insurance-Liability	402.00
6900 Bank & Pay Pal Exp.	273.96
7000 - Other Expense	1,269.55
<b>Committees</b>	
6700 Committees - Membership	113.62
6708 Committees - Conserv/Proj	3,000.00
<b>Total Committees</b>	3,113.62
<b>Officers</b>	
6840 Officers - Mmbrship Coor	316.44
<b>Total Officers</b>	316.44
<b>Publications</b>	
6100 Publications - IOU News	2,417.74
6110 Publications - IA Bird Lif	12,536.71
6120 Publications -Internet Svc	224.83
6130 Publicaitons - List Serv	486.00
6140 Publications -Educators Bk	419.01
6150 Publications - Software	271.00
<b>Total Publications</b>	16,355.29
<b>Sales Expense</b>	
6300 T-Shirt Sales	563.24
<b>Total Sales Expense</b>	563.24
<b>Total Expense</b>	47,746.92
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-4,095.40
<b>Net Income</b>	-4,095.40



**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional \$45, Foreign \$35, Goldfinch \$30, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Join, give a gift, or manage your membership on-line at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>. Paper forms for new members and renewals may be mailed to the treasurer (see inside front cover). Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available from Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

**INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS:** Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

**Photos and graphics:** Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (\*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/2" wide by 6-1/2" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at cootjr@iastate.edu. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue** (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1 for spring issue** [2], **July 1 for summer issue** [3], **October 1 for fall issue** [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

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**IOU WEB SITE:** <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster

**IOWA RBA:** John Bissell (jabissell@mchsi.com)

**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:** Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 4 South Ridge Ct., Coralville, IA 52241 (cjcaster@earthlink.net).

**BIRD SIGHTINGS:** Subscribe at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Update your on-line profile at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)> or send address and e-mail changes to Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

**UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:** Fall 2010: 22–24 October 2010, Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge.

**FRONT COVER PHOTO:** Little Blue Heron, Boone, 11 May 2010. Photograph by Paul O. Roisen, Sioux City, IA.

**BACK COVER PHOTO:** Yellow-breasted Chat, Shimek SF, Lee, 30 May 2010. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

**DESIGN:** Marshall Desktop Publishing Inc., Evergreen, CO

**GRAPHICS:** Richard Beachler, Boone, IA

**PRINTER:** Centennial Printing, Louisville, CO



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